

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Page 1, after the first paragraph of text but before the second, please insert

--Background of the invention--.

Page 1, second paragraph (amended):

In the industry, hotmelt processes employing solvent-free coating technology are of growing importance for the preparation of pressure-sensitive adhesive (PSA) compositions. Generally speaking, environmental regulations and rising costs are pushing forward this development process. As well as SIS (styrene-isoprene-styrene copolymer) systems, acrylic polymers are increasingly being applied from the melt as a polymer film to backing materials. Moreover, for ~~specially~~ specialty applications, there is a need for PSA tapes having very low outgassing characteristics. Such characteristics can be ensured only by means of hotmelt processes, since conventional coatings applied from a solution always contain small residual solvent fractions.

Page 4, between lines 15 and 16, please insert

--Summary of the invention--.

Page 4, paragraph beginning at line 26 (amended):

The invention accordingly provides ~~in claim 1~~ a pressure-sensitive adhesive composition comprising polymers and/or copolymers based at least predominantly on (meth)acrylic acid or derivatives thereof and possessing an outgassing level of less than 50 µg/g in total, preferably less than 10 µg/g, based on the weight of the pressure-sensitive adhesive composition. The outgassing level is measured by the technique referred to in the experimental section as the tesa method.

Page 5, before the first line of text, please insert: